

Social Security Program

The Social Security program—Old-Age, Survivors, and Disability Insurance (OASDI)—provides monthly benefits to workers and their families when earnings stop or are reduced because the worker retires, dies, or becomes disabled. The amount of the worker's retirement insurance (old-age) or disability benefit is based on the worker's level of earnings in employment or self-employment covered by the Social Security program. The benefit amount for an auxiliary or survivor beneficiary is based on a percentage of the worker's benefit. Monthly benefits are payable to retired workers at age 65 (reduced benefits at 62) or to disabled workers at any age. Auxiliary and survivor beneficiaries must generally meet an age, a disability, or child care requirement.

Nationally, in December 2001 benefits were paid to 45,874,040 persons. This number included 28,841,850 retired workers, 5,024,520 widows and widowers, 5,265,190 disabled workers, 2,895,150 wives and husbands, and 3,847,330 children. Social Security beneficiaries represented 15.7 percent of the total population and 91.2 percent of the population 65 or older.

Monthly benefits averaged \$874 for retired workers; \$820 for all widows and widowers (\$841 for nondisabled widows and widowers); \$815 for disabled workers; and \$430 for wives and husbands of retired and disabled workers. Average payments for children of deceased workers were \$570; for children of retired workers, \$414; and for children of disabled workers, \$239.

Monthly payments for December 2001 totaled \$36.5 billion. Of this amount, \$26.6 billion was paid to retired workers and their dependents; \$5.2 billion to survivors; and \$4.7 billion to disabled workers and their dependents. Average benefits and total monthly payments include the 2.6 percent cost-of-living increase effective December 2001.

In the **District of Columbia**, benefits were paid to 73,390 persons. This number included 48,090 retired workers; 7,440 widows and widowers; 8,560 disabled workers; 2,820 wives and husbands; and 6,480 children. Social Security beneficiaries represented 12.8 percent of the total population of the state and 78.6 percent of the state's population aged 65 or older.

Retired workers in the District of Columbia received an average of \$741 per month; widows and widowers, \$685; disabled workers, \$760; and wives and husbands of retired and disabled workers, \$384. Average payments for children were: \$351 for children of retired workers; \$445 for children of deceased workers; and \$230 for children of disabled workers.

Monthly payments in December 2001 totaled \$51 million. Of this amount, \$37 million was paid to retired workers and their dependents; \$7 million to survivors; and \$7 million to disabled workers and their dependents.

Supplemental Security Income Program

Supplemental Security Income (SSI) is a federal cash assistance program that provides monthly payments to low-income aged, blind, and disabled persons in the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the Northern Mariana Islands. The program is based on nationally uniform eligibility standards and payment levels. The federal SSI payment is determined by the recipient's countable income, living arrangement, and marital status. As of January 2002, the maximum monthly federal SSI payment for an individual living in his or her own household and with no other countable income is \$545, and for a couple, \$817.

A state may supplement the payment levels of all or selected categories of recipients. These supplemental payments may be administered by the state or the Social Security Administration.

In December 2001, 6,688,489 persons received federally administered SSI payments including 1,264,463 aged, and 5,424,026 who were disabled or blind. A total of 1,995,159 recipients were aged 65 or older, 3,811,494 were 18 to 64, and 881,836 were under age 18.

The total number of persons receiving either a Social Security payment, a federally administered SSI payment, or both was 50,172,400. Federally administered payments totaled over \$2.8 billion in December 2001: \$2.5 billion in federal SSI payments, and \$302 million in state supplements. The average federally administered payment was \$394. The aged averaged \$314; disabled and blind, \$413.

In addition, 689,163 persons in 30 states received state-administered payments in December 2001, which totaled \$75 million.

In the **District of Columbia**, 19,973 persons—2,356 aged, and 17,617 disabled and blind—received federally administered SSI payments in December 2001. A total of 4,726 recipients were aged 65 or older, 11,833 between 18 and 64, and 3,414 under 18.

Federally administered SSI payments totaled \$8.6 million, of which \$8.3 million was federal SSI and \$304,222, state supplementation. The average federally administered payment was \$395 overall, \$246 for aged recipients, and \$415 for those disabled and blind.

In December 2001, the total number of persons in the District of Columbia receiving either a Social Security benefit, a federally administered SSI payment, or both was 87,907.

Social Security Earnings and Employment

Nationally, in 1999, the latest year for which state data are available, an estimated 151.4 million persons worked in employment that was covered under the Social Security (Old-Age, Survivors, and Disability Insurance or OASDI) program. They earned \$3.7 trillion in Social Security taxable earnings. Employees, employers, and the self-employed paid a total of \$464 billion in Social Security taxes to the OASI and DI Trust Funds.

In the **District of Columbia** in 1999, an estimated 363,000 residents worked in employment covered under the Social Security program. They had \$10.16 billion in Social Security taxable earnings. Employees, employers, and the self-employed paid a total of \$1.26 billion in Social Security taxes.

Medicare Earnings and Employment

Nationally, in 1999, the latest year for which state data are available, an estimated 154.7 million persons worked in employment that was covered under the Medicare (Hospital Insurance or HI) program. They earned \$4.6 trillion in Medicare taxable earnings. Employees, employers, and the self-employed paid a total of \$134 billion in Medicare taxes to the HI Trust Fund.

In the **District of Columbia** in 1999, an estimated 377,000 residents worked in employment covered under the Medicare program. They had \$14.68 billion in Medicare taxable earnings. Employees, employers, and the self-employed paid a total of \$426 million in Medicare taxes.



Angela Y. Harper was responsible for the programming, processing and compiling of data. For additional information pertaining to data in the factsheet, please contact Rona Blumenthal (410-965-0163) for Social Security data; Arthur Kahn for SSI program data (410-965-0186); and for information about earnings and employment, Greg Diez (410-965-0153). For technical information about the data processing, contact Angela Y. Harper (410-965-0106). For additional copies, contact the Division of Information Resources (202-358-6274) or check SSA's web site: <http://www.ssa.gov/policy>.